DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 418 582 FL 025 020

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TITLE	The World's Writing Systems.
ISBN	ISBN-0-19-507993-0
PUB DATE	1996-00-00
NOTE	967p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Oxford University Press, Inc., 198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016.
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Collected Works - General (020) -- Reference Materials - General (130)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Alphabets; Diachronic Linguistics; Foreign Countries; Geographic Distribution; Graphemes; Language Classification; *Language Patterns; *Language Variation; *Languages; *Orthographic Symbols; Sociolinguistics; Uncommonly Taught Languages; *Written Language

ABSTRACT

This survey of the world's written languages consists of a series of historical sketches of different languages, each including a table of signforms in their standard order and their variations, but focusing primarily on how the sounds of the language are represented in writing. A brief text in the language(s) the script is used for is also included, and for each script, the standard transliteration is shown. The book is organized into 13 parts, by writing system and chronology, and coincidentally by region, but not by language family. Part 1, "Grammatology" (Peter T. Daniels) discusses grammatology, the study of writing systems, the history of the study of writing, typology of writing systems and related topics. Part 2, "Ancient Near Eastern Writing Systems," includes "The First Civilizations" (Peter T. Daniels), "Anatolian Hieroglyphs" (H. Craig Melchert), "Aegean Scripts" (Emmett L. Bennett), and "Old Persian Cuneiform" (David D. Testen). Part 3, "Decipherment," includes "Methods of Decipherment" (Peter T. Daniels), "The Proto-Elamite Script" (Robert K. Englund), "The Indus Script" (Asko Parpola), "Maya and Other Mesoamerican Scripts" (Martha J. Macri), and "Rongorongo of Easter Island" (Macri). Part 4, "East Asian Writing Systems" includes "Early Chinese Writing" (William G. Boltz), "Modern Chinese Writing" (Victor H. Mair), "Japanese Writing" (Janet S. Smith), "Korean Writing" (Ross King), "Siniform Scripts of Inner Asia" ("Tangut" by E. I. Kychanov, and "Kitan and Jurchin" by Gyorgy Kara), "The Yi Script" (Dingxu Shi), and "Asian Calligraphy" (John Stevens). Part 5, "European Writing Systems" includes "Transmission of the Phoenician Script to the West" (Pierre Swiggers), "The Greek Alphabet" (Leslie Threatte), "The Anatolian Alphabets" (Swiggers and Wolfgang Jenniges), "The Coptic Alphabet" (Robert K. Ritner), and the "The Gothic Alphabet" (Ernst Ebbinghaus), "The Scripts of Italy" (Larissa Bonfante), "The Roman Alphabet" (Stan Knight), "The Runic Script" (Ralph W. V. Elliott), "Ogham" (Damian McManus), "The Slavic Alphabets" (Paul Cubberley), "The Armenian Alphabet" (Avedis K. Sanjian), and "The Georgian Alphabet" (Dee Ann Holisky). Part 6, "South Asian Writing Systems," includes "Brahmi and Kharoshti" (Richard G. Salomon), "The Devanagari Script" (William Bright), "Gujarati Writing" (P. J. Mistry), "The Gurmukhi Script" (Harjeet Singh Gill), "Bengali Writing" (Tista Bagchi), "Oriya Writing" (B. P. Mahapatra), "Sinhala Writing" (James W. Gair), "Kannada and Telugu Writing" (William Bright), "Malayalam Writing" (K. P. Mohanan), "Tamil Writing"

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(Sanford B. Steever), and "The Tibetan Script and Derivatives" (Leonard W. J. van der Kuijp). Part 7, "Southeast Asian Writing Systems" includes "The Spread of Brahmic Script into Souteast Asia" (Christopher Court), "Burmese Writing" (Julian K. Wheatley), "Thai and Lao Writing" (Anthony Diller), "Khmer Writing" (Eric Schiller), and "Insular Southeast Asian Scripts" (Joel C. Kuipers and Ray McDermott). Part 8, "Middle Eastern Writing Systems" includes "The Jewish Scripts" (Richard L. Goerwitz), "Aramaic Scripts for Aramaic Languages" (Daniels and Robert D. Hoberman), "Aramaic Scripts for Iranian Languages" (P. Oktor Skjaervo), "Aramaic Scripts for Altaic Languages (Kara), "Arabic Writing" (Thomas Bauer), "Dhivehi Writing" (James W. Gair and Bruce D. Cain), and "Ethiopic Writing" (Getatchew Haile). Part 9, "Scripts Invented in Modern Times" include "The Invention of Writing" (Daniels), "Cherokee Writing" (Janine Scancarelli), "Scripts of West Africa" (John Victor Singler), "The Cree Syllabary" (John D. Nichols), "Scripts for Munda Languages" (Norman Zide), and "The Pahawh Hmong Script" (Martha Ratliff). Part 10, "Use and Adaptation of Scripts," includes "A Functional Classification" (John Mountford), "Adaptations of the Roman Alphabet" (Edward Tuttle), "Adaptations of the Cyrillic Alphabet" (Bernard Comrie), and "Adaptations of Arabic Script: (Alan S. Kaye). Part 11, "Sociolinguistics and Scripts," includes "Germany: Script and Politics" (Gerhard Augst), "Serbo-Croatian: A Biscriptal Language" (Laurie Beth Feldman and Dragana Barac-Cikoja), "South Asia: Coexistence of Scripts" (Colin P. Masica), "Christian Missionary Activities" (Allan Gleason) and "Script Reform in and after the Soviet Union" (Bernard Comrie). Part 12, "Secondary Notation Systems," includes "The Alphabet as a Technology" (M. O'Connor), "Numerical Notation" (John Soren Petterson), "Shorthand" (Daniels), "Phonetic Notation" (Michael K. C. McMahon), "Music Notation" (James D. McCawley), and "Movement Notation Systems" (Brenda Farnell). Finally, Part 13, "Imprinting and Printing" includes "Analog and Digital Writing" (Daniels). Contains an index. (MSE)

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